



Vail Pride Day

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Saturday, February 20, 2010

I am absolutely delighted to be here and to celebrate Vail Pride Day with you.

It is truly an honor for me to participate in the recognition of some of our state's most outstanding students, teachers, administrators and volunteers.

This also gives me an opportunity to honor the PARENTS of these outstanding students. You are the OTHER side of the education equation. You are what makes it balance. Without you, our children's learning would never be complete.

And, Superintendent Baker, I thank you for the invitation to be here.

Your innovative ideas and leadership have established a tradition of educational excellence that brings State, National and International recognition to your district.

You have made Vail Proud -- and I am Proud of You!

For the past three years ALL of Vail's regular schools have received the label of "Excelling" -- the HIGHEST possible ranking by the Arizona Department of Education.

And Sycamore Elementary has been designated as an "A+ School" in addition to receiving the "Golden Bell Award."

These high standards and achievements would not have been realized without the dedication and hard work of each of you here today.

We are also very proud of the numerous awards and honors that have been given to your teachers, administrators and Governing Board members.

The influence of Vail is spreading across the state. Your governing board member, Debbie King, serves as the President of the Arizona School Boards Association and Superintendent Baker is the President-Elect of the Arizona School Administrators Association.

It is my privilege today to present the awards to the winners of the Math Bowl -- a competition that finished just moments ago. Each of Vail's 7 elementary schools, 4 middle schools and 3 high schools formed a team of 4 students. These students are chosen from the sharpest, fastest and highest achieving math students they have.

Come to think of it, would you all mind if I borrowed these students for a little while to help the Legislature with the budget?

Vail is truly a "Lighthouse" District that is showing the way -- and you all can take great pride in that.

As Governor, despite our state's economic challenges, I intend to see that light continues to shine throughout Arizona.

But I do not overstate the case when I say that the excellence we all see here in abundance at Vail will not continue without a positive response from the voters on May 18th.

I fought for – and won, thanks to the help of courageous members of both parties in the State Senate and the State House – the right of the VOTERS to decide whether to raise the state sales tax by 1 percent over the next three years.

I've never voted to raise taxes in my entire career, but In 27 years in public service, I've learned one thing above all else: Doing the right thing almost always means doing the hard thing.

I will be a "YES" vote come Election Day.

I'm voting "YES" because it's the right thing to do, and I strongly encourage you to vote "YES" as well. If we are to preserve the core functions of the Arizona we all love, then Prop 100 must pass.

Prop 100 will keep funding for Arizona's K-12 education system at reasonable levels, keeping students learning and class sizes manageable. It will go to our universities and community colleges to keep higher education affordable. It will go to keep felons locked up and it will go to give Arizona's poorest families the help they desperately need.

I have been a truth teller my entire career. So, here's the truth: without the revenue a "YES" vote will bring, these programs must be cut by more than \$1 billion immediately. The damage done to education, and public safety would be far too great.

That's why Prop 100 is the right thing to do. This is a temporary tax that will get us through until revenues recover, so that education does not bear the brunt of the downturn.

Please understand, though, that this isn't a cure-all. In the past year, we've streamlined state government by more than \$1 billion -- with more reductions to come. I have reduced the size of Government more than any Governor in state history. We have tax reforms and an aggressive pro-growth job creation program that are ramping up, but still we need Prop 100.

It's a hard request to make, but it's the right one, for our state and for our future. Please vote "YES" on Prop 100.

I did not create this situation -- but I intend to resolve it -- and continue telling the people the truth about it. I am a problem solver. And, with your help, we will get through this.

My mother raised two children, opened up a business of her own and never quit.

My mother met every challenge that came her way ...

I am my mother's daughter.

I will never quit on education.

I will never give up on our schools.

I will not yield when it comes to the classroom.

So, to all of the Vail students I say, continue to do your best, in everything you do. Don't do your best just because your parents -- or even the Governor -- tells you.

Do it for yourselves.

You have done wonderful things with your education so far - continue to grab hold of every opportunity - and carry on with tomorrow and all those great tomorrows that follow.

Again, Congratulations to the winners and participants in the Math Bowl and to all of our winners here today!

May God bless you and may God bless the Vail School District.